School Quality Review Report

Ralph Waldo Emerson School 58

Indianapolis Public Schools

May 8-9, 2018

Review Team Members

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I. Background on the School Quality Review

Public Law 221 (PL 221) was passed in 1999 before the enactment of the federal *No Child Left behind Act* (NCLB). It serves as the state's accountability framework. Among other sanctions, the law authorizes the Indiana State Board of Education (SBOE) to assign an expert team to conduct a School Quality Review for schools placed in the lowest category or designation of school performance for two consecutive years.

> *(a) The board shall direct that the department conduct a quality review of a school that is subject to IC 20-31-9-3. (b) The board shall determine the scope of the review and appoint an expert team under IC 20-31-9-3. (Indiana State Board of Education; 511 IAC 6.2-8-2; filed Jan 28, 2011, 3:08 p.m.: 20110223-IR-511100502FRA)*

The school quality review (SQR) is a needs assessment meant to evaluate the academic program and operational conditions within an eligible school. The SQR will result in actionable feedback that will promote improvement, including the reallocation of resources or requests for technical assistance. The process is guided by a rubric aligned to the United States Department of Education's "Eight Turnaround Principles" (see Appendix B). The school quality review includes a pre-visit analysis and planning meeting, onsite comprehensive review, and may include targeted follow-up visits.

State law authorizes the SBOE to establish an expert team to conduct the School Quality Review known as the Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Membership must include representatives from the community or region the school serves; and, may consist of school superintendents, members of governing bodies, teachers from high performing school corporations, and special consultants or advisers.

II. Overview of the School Quality Review Process

The School Quality Review process is designed to identify Ralph Waldo Emerson School 58's strengths and areas for improvement organized around the United States Department of Education's Eight School Turnaround Principles. In particular, the School Quality Review process focused on two Turnaround Principles that were identified as priorities by the school and its district.

The on-site review consisted of the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) visiting the school for two days. During the two days, the TAT (1) conducted separate focus groups with students, teachers, and parents, (2) observed a professional learning community meeting with teachers, (3)observed instruction in 16 classrooms, and (4) interviewed school and district leaders.

Prior to the visit, teachers completed an online survey, with eight of 87 teachers participating. Parents and family members were also invited to complete a survey; 34 completed this survey. Finally, the school leadership team completed a self-evaluation. Both surveys and the self-evaluation are made up of questions that align to school improvement principles and indicators (Appendix B).

III. Data Snapshot for Ralph Waldo Emerson School 58

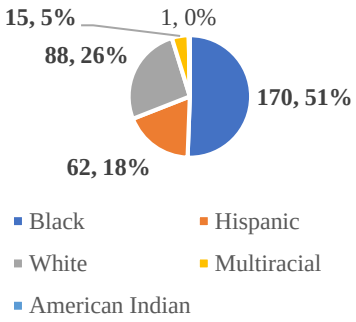
School Report Card

2015-2016 Report Card	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*
Performance Domain Grades 3-8	23.65	0.5	11.83
Growth Domain Grades 4-8	90.00	0.5	45.00
Overall Points			56.9
Overall Grade			F

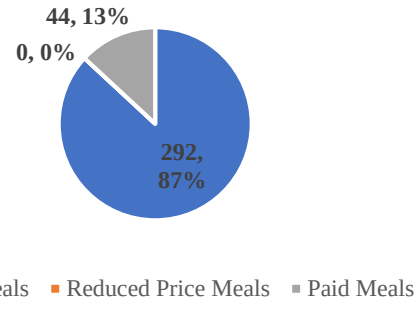
2016-2017 Report Card	*Points*	*Weight*	*Weighted Points*
Performance Domain Grades 3-8	25.40	0.5	12.70
Growth Domain Grades 4-8	78.6	0.5	29.30
Overall Points			52.0
Overall Grade			F

Enrollment 2017-2018: 336 students

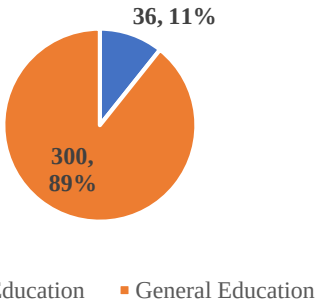
Enrollment 2017-2018 by Ethnicity



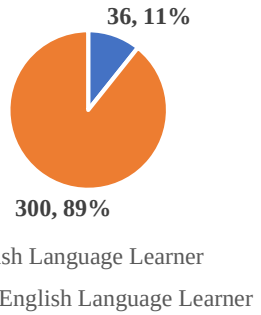
Enrollment 2017-2018 by Free/Reduced Price Meals



Enrollment 2017-2018 by Special Education



Enrollment 2017-2018 by English Language Learners

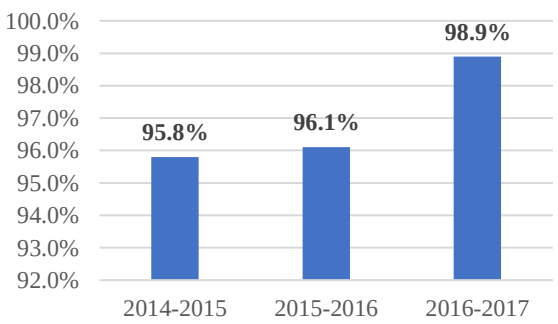


Attendance

Attendance by Grade

Grade	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17
K	51	60	47
1	49	47	49
2	38	57	48
3	60	46	43
4	50	46	33
5	52	54	43
6	54	52	55

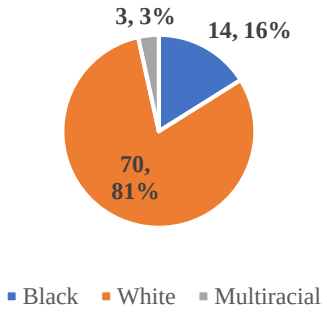
Attendance Rate Trend



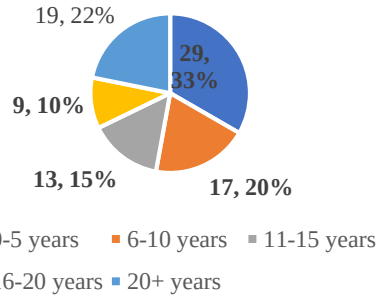
School Personnel

Teacher Count 2016-2017: 87

Teacher Count 2016-2017 by Ethnicity

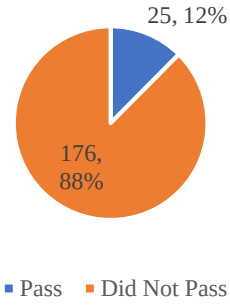


Teacher Count 2016-2017 by Years of Experience

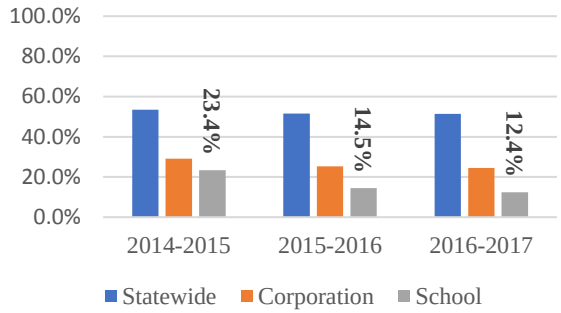


Student Academic Performance

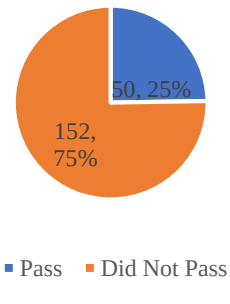
ISTEP+ 2016-2017
Both English/Language Arts and Math



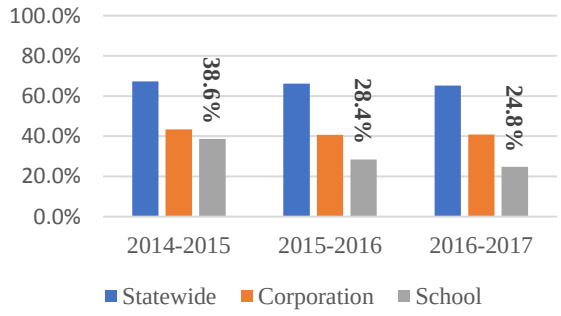
ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend
Both English/Language Arts and Math



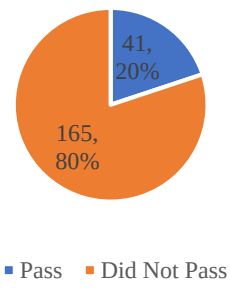
ISTEP+ 2016-2017: English/Language Arts



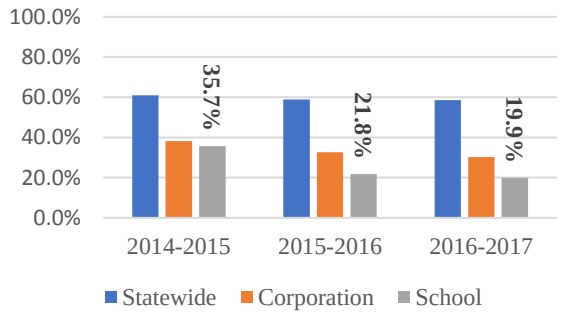
ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: English/Language Arts



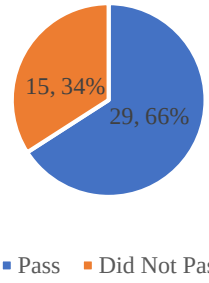
ISTEP+ 2016-2017: Math



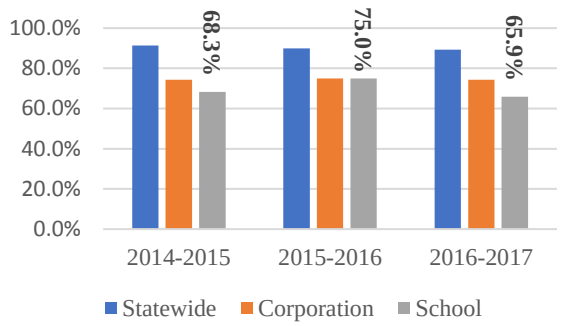
ISTEP+ Percent Passing Trend: Math



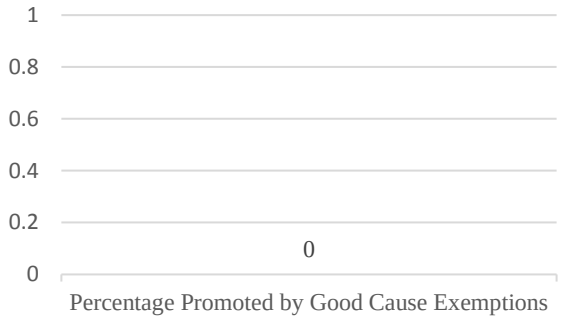
IREAD-3 2016-2017



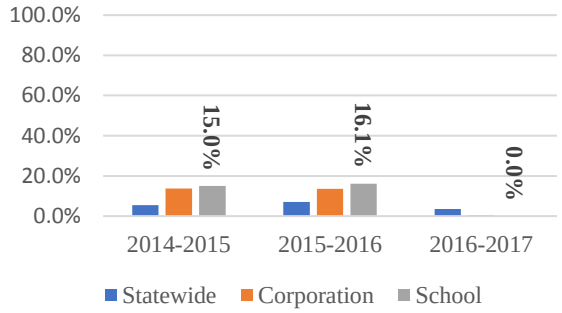
IREAD-3 Percent Passing Trend



IREAD-3 Percentage Promoted by Good Cause Exemptions 2016-2017



IREAD-3 Good Cause Promotion Exemption Trend



IV. Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction

Background
The next two sections of the report illustrate the Technical Assistance Team's key findings, supporting evidence, and overall rating for each of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

To thoughtfully identify these prioritized Turnaround Principles, school and district leaders used a "Turnaround Principle Alignment Tool" provided by the Indiana State Board of Education to determine the two to three Turnaround Principles that most closely align with the goals and strategies outlined in the school's improvement plan.

This report focuses on these prioritized Turnaround Principles to provide a strategically targeted set of findings and recommendations. Additional evidence on the other six Turnaround Principles can be found in Appendix A of this report.

School Turnaround Principle 3: Effective Instruction			
Evidence Sources			
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **Students were respectful of each other and followed directions.**			• 2.1, 2.3, 3.6,
• **Hallway and cafeteria procedures are evident by student compliance.**			• 2.1, 3.6,
• **Teachers and students reflected the significant, positive impact of "Reset Central", the social-emotional/sensory room.**			• 3.2, 3.6
Areas for Improvement			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **87% of classroom observations noted the lack of rigorous instruction.**			• 3.2, 3.6, 4.4,
• **Teachers' actions, such as showing the inability to define effective classroom practice, being unable to articulate**			• 2.3, 3.6,

strategies for improving instruction, and the lack of mastery of objectives, demonstrate low expectations.

V. Evidence and Rating for School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention Systems

School Turnaround Principle 4: Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System			
Evidence Sources			
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,			
Rating			
1 Ineffective *No evidence of this happening in the school*	2 Improvement Necessary *Limited evidence of this happening in the school*	3 Effective *Routine and consistent*	4 Highly Effective *Exceeds standard and drives student achievement*
Evidence			
Strengths			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **The district provided interim assessment is implemented.**			• 4.2, 4.3,
• **The math instructional sequence is mapped and calendared.**			• 4.1, 4.4
• **The math assessment schedule is aligned to the curriculum map.**			• 4.1, 4.4
Areas for Improvement			Aligned Turnaround Principle Indicator(s)
• **Assessment scope and sequence determines the pacing of instruction. The collected assessment data is not used to adjust instruction based on student need.**			• 4.5,
• **Students are not placed in evidence-based tier 2 or 3 interventions.**			• 3.3, 3.5, 4.3, 4.5

VI. Recommendations

Background
This section outlines an intentionally targeted set of recommendations that align to one or more of the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles. Anchored in the United States Department of Education's Turnaround Principles framework, these recommendations are representative of what the Technical Assistance Team believes to be the most immediate changes needed to accelerate growth in academic and non-academic student outcomes at Ralph Waldo Emerson School. These recommendations should not be thought of as an exhaustive set of school improvement strategies, but rather as a part of the ongoing and continuous school improvement process.

Recommendation 1
Develop and implement a cohesive, school-wide system to analyze student data including attendance, behavior referrals, and academic progress toward mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards. Utilize the data to drive the implementation of decisions regarding enrichment, remediation, and adjustments to instruction in order to meet rigorous academic expectations while supporting the growth and success of all students.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 2.3, 3.1, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3,
Rationale
It was clear through conversations with the staff that a cohesive system to analyze attendance, behavior, and academic progress data does not exist. "A strong culture of data use, conveyed through a clear schoolwide vision, is critical to ensure that data-based decisions are made routinely, consistently, and effectively."[1] Based on classroom observations, the observation of a professional learning community and numerous discussions with teachers and the school leader, the current use of data to inform instructional decisions is not the prevalent culture and results in a lack of cohesion and focus in regards to tier one instruction. "Carrying out data collection depends on considering the strengths, limitations, and timing of each data type and preparing data in a format that can reveal patterns in student achievement."[2] There does not appear to be a consistent method for this systematic data collection approach. Creating a data dashboard to collect and display information in a manner that is consumable to the staff is an essential step in targeting student achievement. "Reflective practice, requiring the individual to think about their work and consider improvements, is a researched proven tool that improves educator effectiveness."[3] Continuous improvement must be focused on data analysis and data driven decision making and action planning followed by reflection on the success of the plan. An ongoing monitoring cycle ensures progress and identifies the need for action. It is essential that teachers understand where students are falling short of meeting a standard or where they are ready for new content.

[1] Hamilton, L., Halverson, R., Jackson, S., Mandinach, E., Supovitz, J., and Wayman, J. (2009). Using student achievement data to support instructional decision making. U.S. Department of Education.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Hinckely, P. (2012). Monitoring: Keeping your finger on the pulse of school improvement. Indianapolis: IBJ Book Publishing

The following steps are recommended to support the use of data.

1. At regular intervals, evaluate student level data in the context of mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards and in light of the expectations set forth in the pacing guide.
2. Set specific goals for growth towards mastery of standards for each student.
3. Make necessary and appropriate adjustments to instruction and provide additional supports based on the evaluation and goals.

Recommendation 2
Implement and maintain a coherent plan of action to assess instructional practices by using strategic and intentional observation cycles that are focused on data collection and rigorous instruction. These walkthroughs should compare what is observed to a precisely defined set of high quality, evidence-based practices essential for effective Tier I instruction. Collect this data and work with administrative team and instructional coaching staff to monitor these findings to ensure desired practices are implemented and sustained. Concurrently, work with building leadership to develop a comprehensive professional development framework for institutionalizing high-quality instructional practices. Establish an instructional coaching cycle that supports teachers to implement curriculum and best instructional practices with fidelity. Provide teachers and staff with ongoing, job-embedded professional development to ensure the expectations for tracking, analyzing, and acting on student academic and behavioral data are clear. Dedicate staff time for collaborative analysis of student-level data to determine the most appropriate course of action to support student achievement.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.9, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 5.3, 5.5 6.1
Rationale
Since instruction does not happen by accident, but must be intentionally planned and delivered, teachers must be skilled at creating and instructing such high quality lessons. Teachers must confidently know what they want students to know, understand, and be able to do as a result of instruction. When this is not clear to teachers, it is almost certain that lessons will not be engaging and that developed tasks will not promote mastery of required standards. If intervention to battle this lack of knowledge does not exist in a job embedded coaching cycle, improvement is not likely to occur.. If there is an expectation that teachers use best practices, increase rigor and monitor engagement and base lessons on objectives rooted in Indiana Academic Standards and that such lessons are delivered using evidence-based pedagogical practices, then systematic appraisal of these expectations, followed by an intentional, concise, effective coaching cycle, must occur. The instructional coaches reflected on their hindered abilities to impact classroom practice schoolwide due to increased administrative duties and the practice of allowing coaching to be an option for teachers. A strong coaching cycle will hold teachers accountable for implementing curriculum with fidelity. Setting expectations through the coaching cycle and following through with support will allow teachers the space to grow in their instructional practice. This type of job-embedded professional learning leads to the implementation of new practices and meets the needs of each individual teacher.

Recommendation 3
Evaluate, enhance, and maintain a collaborative, supportive school culture and climate that supports development of students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral development. Establish expectations and protocols for staff interactions with each other and with students. Dedicate time during staff meetings to build culture with team building exercises that encourage professionalism and align with the school's achievement goals. As part of this process, conduct a schoolwide stakeholder culture and climate survey to identify areas of greatest need for the school's growth in positive and production culture.
Aligned Turnaround Principle(s)
1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 8.1, 8.2
Rationale
During the instructional team and teacher interviews, there were numerous accounts of the unprofessional behavior of staff members toward each other. Those interviewed shared experiences of staff members using raised voices to forcefully get a point across and refusal to participate in coaching provided by the school to improve instructional quality. This type of culture is not only unproductive but is destructive to student learning and growth. "In a profession, evidence trumps appeals to mindless precedent ("This is how I have always done it") or personal preference ("This is how I like to do it"). Therefore, effective principals ensure staff members are provided with the evidence to make informed decisions. They do not allow an individual's preference to supersede a professional's obligation to apply what is considered the most effective practice in his or her field." [4] Culture and climate happen with intentionality and are led by the vision of the leader. A productive school culture values academic learning and promotes social growth while maintaining high expectations for students and staff. According the study released by the University of Chicago in relation to the 5 Essentials, schools with strong collaboration of teachers and a supportive environment show a strong correlation to student achievement. In fact, it shows that a .76 positive impact on student achievement occurs when there is a strong teacher-teacher trust culture. Further a .85 positive impact occurs when there is a strong culture of student teacher trust.[5] Effective collaboration improve teacher performance, but it also will improve student performance. Increased effective collaboration exposes teachers to improved practices, which leads to stronger pedagogy. The more effective a teacher is, the more a student will benefit.[6]

[4] Dufour, R. and Dufour, R. The School Leader's Guide to Professional Learning Communities at Work. Solution Tree. Bloomington, IN. 2012

[5] Klugman, J., Gordan, M., Sebring, P. B., Sporte, S. E.. (2015). A First Look at the 5 Essentials in Illinois Schools. Retrieved from: https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Statewide%205E%20Executive%20Summary.pdf

[6] Perez, J., (2015) Taking the Doors Off the Classroom Through Collaboration. Retrieved from: http://www.hotchalkeducationnetwork.com/collaboration-with-purpose/

VII. Appendix A: Evidence for Remaining School Turnaround Principles

Background
We believe it is valuable for school and district leaders to have a summary of the TAT's findings and evidence for each of the eight Turnaround Principles. As such, this section of the report outlines key findings and supporting evidence for each of the Turnaround Principles that were not identified by school and district leaders as prioritized Turnaround Principles for this school.

This information is intentionally provided in an appendix to reinforce the importance of the previously stated findings, evidence, ratings, and recommendations for the school's prioritized Turnaround Principles.

School Turnaround Principle 1: School Leadership
Evidence Sources
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,
Evidence Summary
Strengths • Administrative staff is visible in the building and moves around to different locations to monitor school activities. • The leadership team used behavior data to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Areas for Improvement • The principal expressed a vision for high quality learning but did not have a system in place to foster or monitor it. • Teachers expressed feedback from leadership was infrequent and not focused on improving the quality of instruction.

School Turnaround Principle 2: Climate and Culture
Evidence Sources
Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,
Evidence Summary
Strengths • The staff support and regularly utilize the social-emotional/sensory room, "Reset Central". • Students reported feeling safe at school.

Areas for Improvement

- As observed throughout the SQR visit, the school's singular focus on addressing behavior needs does not allow for adequate academic learning for all students.
- Student teacher interactions were observed to be often dismissive and disrespectful. For example, when a TAT member entered the classroom and a student asked "Who is that?", the teacher replied "None of your business, get back to work!" This indicates a lack of mutual respect and lack of priority placed on building relationships.

School Turnaround Principle 5: Effective Staffing Practices

Evidence Sources

Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- The building has a school social worker, two academic coaches, and one climate and culture coach.
- Teachers participate in weekly PLC meetings lead by the academic coaches.

Areas for Improvement

- 49% of parents reported they do not know when their child's class is taught by a substitute teacher. Teachers reported a lack of substitute teachers is a daily strain on stability and instruction.
- Teacher professional development was not explicitly tied to student learning outcomes.

School Turnaround Principle 6: Effective Use of Data

Evidence Sources

Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- Building-wide, short and long term behavior goals are set using the data.
- Teachers have regularly scheduled collaboration time.

Areas for Improvement

- While some academic data is collected, there are no systematic ways of reviewing academic data.
- Leader walk-throughs do not systematically focus on addressing high priority needs.

School Turnaround Principle 7: Effective Use of Time

Evidence Sources

Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- Transition times are orderly and efficient.
- A basic calendar of teacher collaboration time exists.

Areas for Improvement

- The school has not enrolled students in intervention programs to address the needs of students who are behind in English/language arts and/or math.

School Turnaround Principle 8: Family and Community Engagement

Evidence Sources

Classrooms Observations, Individual Staff Interviews, Parent Survey Data, School Leader Self-Assessment, Student Focus Group, Instructional Leadership Team Focus Group, Teacher Focus Group, Community Partner Focus Group, School Improvement Plan,

Evidence Summary

Strengths

- Strong group of active community stakeholders exists to support the school.
- 51% of parents agree or strongly agree the school works to engage them as a partner in their child's learning.

Areas for Improvement

- Community stakeholders reported poor communication from the school despite actively seeking opportunities to contribute to the school.